



ASLEF

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JOURNAL
OCTOBER 2012

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4

Transport minister
round about

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Excluding women from railways

DURING last month's TUC I spoke about increasing the diversity of train drivers. But while I argued that women could be encouraged to our profession, other forces seem intent on driving them away from our trains.

Last month we found the Women's Institute wading in and taking up the cudgels on behalf of women passengers. Perhaps that shouldn't have been a surprise, but the bizarre wriggling of the government and the train companies certainly was.

The WI said if there are less uniformed staff on trains and stations, passenger safety is compromised. As women are especially vulnerable, they would be most affected. It's difficult to argue with. Or is it?

A Department for Transport spokesman said that safety on the rail network was paramount but the number of passengers buying tickets at stations was falling. Well, yes – but surely a factor is that they are given no choice! If your booking office is closed, it is illegal to get on a train without a ticket and if you buy one on the day it will be at a hugely inflated price – well, yes: you find some other way of buying a ticket. But it's not exactly a decision, is it?

A spokesman for London Midland went on a bit about 'commercial sense' and then added the mysterious phrase, 'There is a perception that staffed stations are safer.' It doesn't require the services of Sherlock Holmes to deduce that this is a fact, not a perception.

The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) said it took safety very seriously and had spent millions installing CCTV. Which rather misses the point that if there were staff in attendance, they could have prevented someone being attacked or robbed, rather than supplying a blurred picture of who did it. Which do you think the WI would prefer?

The government is intent on removing 20,000 jobs from the railways. The figure is ludicrous, but obviously some jobs could go. I suggest we start with the men at the top.

Mick Whelan, General Secretary



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ABOUT **ASLEF**

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**More than
just a union**

Long term planning 'not helped by short term Transport Ministers'

THE McNulty Report, the basis of the government's rail planning, insisted that the industry needs 'strong leadership'. In which case, Mick Whelan has been asking, why is the job of Transport Secretary treated like a game of musical chairs?

Since 2002 the average time in the post has been less than 18 months. Over the last ten years the Transport Secretary post has been held by Alistair Darling (May 2002 to May 2006), Douglas Alexander (May 2006 to June 2007), Ruth Kelly (June 2007 to October 2008), Geoff Noon (October 2008 to June 2009),

Andrew Adonis (June 2009 to May 2010), Philip Hammond (May 2010 to October 2011) and Justine Greening (October 2011 to 4 September 2012).

'When will politicians learn that they need to give a high priority to transport?' Mick asks. 'Transport is one of the major national issues for the public, along with health and education – but politicians don't seem to get the message.'

TWO DOZEN CLUB

The sacking last month of Justine Greening makes her the 24th living person to have held

this position!

Ms Greening paid the price for insisting that her party should stand by its pre-election pledge to oppose a new runway at Heathrow. She has been replaced by former Conservative Chief Whip Patrick McLoughlin, who presumably has no such qualms.

There is good news and bad about the new transport minister for trade unionists. On the one hand, he is a former miner who was a member of the National Union of Mineworkers. On the other, he was one of only six Staffordshire miners to break the 1984 NUM strike.



The corridors contain impressions of our history

Unpacking our past

ASLEF's new head office in London's Clerkenwell is, according to general secretary Mick Whelan, 'gradually becoming ours'.

'A new office is one thing, but I also want the building to be a testament to our traditions,' Mick says.

That is why bare walls and empty cupboards are gradually filling up with the union's memorabilia, combining a modern building and an organization aware and proud of its past.



The foyer is a treasure trove of souvenirs

RAIL CABLE THIEVES JAILED

Four men who stole 1,200m of railway cable around Nuneaton in Warwickshire have been jailed for three years each.

Warwickshire Justice Centre heard the four men had caused about 500 hours of delays to trains in the area between August 2010 and March 2011 and resulted in Network Rail having to pay over £200,000 for repairs and fines to train companies because of the delays.

In June, thieves tried to steal a fibre optic subsea cable in the Highlands. The 1,000m (3,281ft) cable crosses Loch Carron between Lochcarron and Strathcarron in Wester Ross.

BT, who own the cable, said the thieves had mistakenly thought the cable contained copper.

92% OF SUMMER TRAINS RAN ON TIME

Network Rail reported last month that 92% of trains ran on time in the late summer period. The figures covered 22 July to 18 August.

The poorest-performing company was Arriva Trains Wales, whose performance was affected by a landslide that delayed services in the Cardiff Valley area, while the best results came on the London to Tilbury and Southend operator c2c which ran 97.4% of trains on time.

Network Rail warned over bonuses



Sir David Higgins

The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has told Network Rail bosses that it would 'be helpful' if they were to forego their six figure annual bonuses if they are responsible for fatal crashes on the network.

Earlier this year NR executive directors pocketed annual bonuses of £2.7 million only months after the company was fined for fatal accidents at Elsenham and Grayrigg.

The letter from ORR chief executive Richard Price says, 'It would be helpful

that in the event of a catastrophic accident for which NR was culpable, no bonuses would be paid.'

'Can you believe it?' asks ASLEF's Mick Whelan. 'Isn't it astonishing that anyone needs to be told this sort of obvious truth?'

But some people do. Network Rail has not abandoned plans to pay chief executive Sir David Higgins and five other directors a total of £18 million in annual and long term bonuses over the next three years.

Death of Potters Bar author



Nina Bawden, who was seriously injured in the Potters Bar accident of 2002 which killed her husband, died last month at the age of 87. One of the last of her 40 books, 'Dear Austen' was about the death of her spouse, Austen Kark.

Nina Bawden became a lifelong socialist

after hearing a speech by Aneurin Bevan when she was a war-time evacuee in Wales – but she resigned from the Labour Party because of its failure to take rail back into the public sector or instigate a public enquiry into Potters Bar.

Playwright Sir David Hare portrayed Nina in his 2004 rail play 'The Permanent Way'. At Sir David's request, former EC President ASLEF Bill Ronksley assisted in its launch in the Sheffield Trades and Labour Club.

Scots trial on broadcast communication

A trial is to be held this leaf fall season in Cathcart Circle/ Neilston Branch, the Newton Branch as far as Kirkhill and from Caldercruix station - Newbridge Junction to examine the feasibility of drivers being able to receive, acknowledge and act upon broadcast messages without the need for stopping the train and giving a verbal acknowledgement.

The trial is based on rail-head conditions during the leaf-fall season, and if successful could mean that in future trains will no longer be required to stop (which can itself be a safety hazard).

Instead, an automatic broadcast will be sent to the cab informing the driver of conditions on the track ahead. When it is received and understood the driver can acknowledge the message by pressing the SG button which will generate an operational text message to the

signaller. The driver will then take whatever action he feels safe and necessary, as normal. On receipt of the text message the signaller will clear the signal protecting the affected area. If the driver is in any doubt as to the content of the message or there are other distractions i.e. TMS or restrictive signals then they should not acknowledge the message via the SG button, the train will then be dealt with under the current rule of stopping the train at the protecting signal and speaking to the signaller.

EC member Dave Calfe who is the ASLEF representative at the project says that the trial will only take place when there is no other degraded working.

Once the trial is complete the outcomes will be reviewed and if successful consider if any modifications are required before the system could be introduced nationally.

Driver takes tractor length of Britain in memory of his son

Last month saw Virgin train driver Fred Sullivan embark on a highly unusual journey to raise funds for the Christie Hospital and Research Centre in Manchester. He set off on the 985-mile trip from Land's End to John o' Groats at the wheel of an old tractor – a 1955 'Old Grey Fergie' that, flat out, rocketed up to 15 mph!

Fred had planned

to do the trip with his son Aaron who sadly died just a couple of weeks before the journey started. Aaron

was admitted as a patient at the Christie when he was diagnosed as having Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Donations can be made at <http://www.justgiving.com/toptobottomtractorrun>



Driver Fred's unusual trip in memory of his son Aaron



Union salutes the Spanish Civil War International Brigade

The International Brigade Memorial Trust (IBMT) held its annual memorial service at London's Jubilee Gardens in July. Waterloo Nine Elms members Charley Martin, Marz Colombini and Steve Richardson attended the service, along with retired member Dave Court (Doncaster branch) and Vice President Tosh MacDonald.

They laid a wreath on behalf of the union in memory of those 'whose open eyes could see no other way' – those anti-fascists who were appalled at the prospect of another European country succumbing to fascism, and were principled and political enough to realise the potential consequences of the shameful act of appeasement by the western democracies.

One of the aims of the IBMT is to educate the public in the history of the men and women who fought in the International Brigades and in the medical and other support services during the Spanish Civil War. As part of the national curriculum, GCSE students study the rise of Nazi Germany, but they don't learn about fascism in general. The curriculum doesn't mention Mussolini's Italy and offers no insight into the terrible events in Franco's Spain.

The British Union of Fascists, the National Front and British Movement have disappeared and I believe that we are now witnessing the demise of the BNP and the EDL. But fascism returns again and again under different guises. We must always be on our guard against the fascist ideal that would aim to destroy our trade union and the democracy that we live in.

● Report from Waterloo Nine Elms Branch Secretary, Steve Richardson

Union tells Minister franchising has 'done nothing for competition, efficiency or subsidies'

Mick Whelan has written to the Department for Transport calling on the government to 'completely re-examine the system of rail franchising'. 'The unseemly scrap between Richard Branson and First Group is the latest public demonstration that franchising is

a failed concept that need to be replaced,' Mick argues. 'Even those bidding don't seem to know the rules!'

Mick points out that when franchising was introduced by the John Major government it was with the aim of introducing

competition. 'That has not happened. There is no competition on lines.' It was supposed to make rail more efficient. 'That has not happened, as the McNulty Report points out with great clarity.' And it was supposed to cut public subsidies.

'That has not happened. They have increased year on year,' Mick points out.

'We call on the Minister to open a full consultation with all concerned parties specifically to discuss how to mend a system that is clearly broken.'

The Greens learn to drive ...

Last year railway husband and wife team Paul and Amanda Green decided to learn to drive. As Paul is a train driver you will have guessed that it wasn't train or car driving they chose! Using the union's ASLEF Education project, they took the opportunity of a free European Computer Driving Licence Course (ECDL).

The course at City College Norwich was on-line, so the Greens could fit it around family and work commitments with progress reviews with tutors arranged either at the station, or the local Trade Union Education Centre.

Paul says, 'I was self-taught on computers and the course has improved



Norwich Branch Secretary Paul Green and his wife Amanda, who have both recently completed the ECDL course with ASLEF Education

my knowledge of what they can do. I was surprised at the number of applications I didn't know existed or had used before and said it was especially useful to have short-cuts in programmes pointed out.'

Both he and

Amanda were pleased with what they got out of the course and say they'd recommend it to anyone wanting to improve their knowledge of computing. 'We might even think about other courses now,' Paul says.

Unions resurrect Basingstoke Learning Centre

When SWT's full time Open Learning staff were redeployed it was only a matter of time before the Learning Centres at Waterloo, Southampton and Basingstoke fell into disuse, reports ASLEF learning rep Clive

Chown. However, the company has now agreed to keep them open, manned on a rotational basis by the unions.

The 18 May saw a rather under-advertised re-launch of Basingstoke Learning Centre on

the same floor as Centre Stage above platform 4.

A steady stream of staff showed interest in the refurbished Learning Suite, courses on offer at Basingstoke College of Engineering and Wokingham College as well as access to the extensive Open Learning CD-ROM based home learning library.

ASLEF full time officer Graham Morris and SWT Director of HR Kelly Barlow were at the event and Graham hopes if the ULR-staffed centre is a success, it will be replicated at the other two locations.



The Basingstoke Centre is back on the rails!

Short rails

○ JUBILEE BALLOT OVER MINOR ERRORS



Members working on London Underground's Jubilee line are to be balloted for action in a dispute over the way that management deals with minor errors, including placing any driver error

on the individual's safety record for 11 years. The company has been told that such 'abrogation of procedures' is not acceptable. The ballot result will be announced on 20 September.

○ 500 CLUB WINNER

The most recent winner of the Retired Members Section monthly draw is B Jones who picked up prize money of £234, reports Alan Taylor.

For more information about the 500 Club, contact Lee James at head office, either by phone or by email to ljames@aslef.org.uk

○ EAST COAST CLEAR WINNER IN 'WORST TOC' AWARD



East Coast has scooped the 'worst TOC' award by several lengths according to Passenger Focus. The company was the subject of 774 complaints to the rail user watchdog

out of a total of 3,000. Most were about ticketing problems and penalty fares. Virgin came in a poor second with 277, although it was a much bigger company. Passenger Focus has no enforcement powers.

○ 900 RAIL JOBS FOR DURHAM

The Department of Transport has approved a £4.5 billion contract with a consortium led by Japanese firm Hitachi to build 92 intercity trains at a newly-built factory in county Durham, in a deal which will create more than 900 UK jobs. The exercise is to replace the UK's Intercity 125 trains with new higher-capacity modern trains.

○ BRANCH HISTORY NOTES

The union's website now has a list of the dates when ASLEF branches first opened, or the earliest date we can find them mentioned in our records. It includes both active branches and those lost in the mists of time. Mick Holder, who did the research, says all the information comes from back numbers of the Journal or the union's annual reports.

It is to be found at the bottom of the 'History of ASLEF' section under the 'About ASLEF' tab on the front page.

○ SATNAV CROSSING WARNING

Systems have been developed for satnavs (satellite navigation systems) to have special warnings for car and van drivers that they are approaching rail level crossings. The technology, devised by Network Rail and Garmin, sounds a train whistle as the motorist approaches a crossing. It is similar to other warnings found on some satnav systems which tell motorists that they are approaching speed cameras.

There were 141 collisions involving trains and cars at level crossings over the past 10 years – and well over 1,000 near misses.



Whatever life throws at you ASLEF will help to protect you.

We offer a range of services to ASLEF members including legal advice and representation on:*

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- Road traffic accident injury
- Industrial disease or illness
- Criminal law representation (for work-related matters)
- Free will writing service
- 30 minutes free telephone advice for any non-work issues such as landlord disputes, neighbourhood disputes, matrimonial and consumer issues
- Employment law accessed through your ASLEF district organiser

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Parental Leave – what's on offer and what we want

During the Queen's speech in May, the proposed reform of the Parental Leave legislation was heralded as a great stride forward for working families. On the surface it looks like good news – but that's not the full story by any means. Debbie Reah of the ASLEF Women's Representative Committee reports ...

IT IS a positive message that early childcare is starting to be seen as a shared responsibility and not just the primary concern of the mother. Fathers are given the opportunity to bond with the child in the all important first year of life, which in the past has not been an option.

Currently, women have the right to 52 weeks of maternity leave, of which the first 9 months are paid and the remaining time unpaid. Fathers and partners are entitled to two weeks of Paternity Leave around the time of the birth.

Since May 2011, women can transfer up to 26 weeks of their maternity leave to the father or partner, this is called 'Additional Paternity Leave' (APL), any remaining statutory maternity pay is then paid to the father. The amount of men taking up APL is believed to be quite low, in part because it has not been very widely publicised.

The proposed changes which the Queen alluded to would give women an automatic paid 18 weeks of maternity leave, reduced from 26 weeks with an additional 6 weeks paid leave for fathers.

A woman could choose to go back to work after 18 weeks – and hand the rest of the parental leave over to her partner. He could then take over eight months off to spend with the baby, of which six months would be paid. Alternatively, both parents could decide to take around six months off with their new baby, at the same time.

SOUNDS BETTER THAN IT IS

It all sounds wonderful. However, there may be pitfalls for both sexes.

The current NHS guidelines state that to gain maximum health benefits for mother and baby, she should breast feed for 26 weeks, and as already stated the proposed changes would bring the automatic allowance down to 18 weeks. Employers may presume that maternity leave will now be 18 weeks after which women will have to ask for more leave and negotiate with their employer about how it may be taken.

A father who wishes to take advantage of

APL and is the main breadwinner could find that the new plans put his family under increased financial pressure. If he chooses to take the maximum 26 weeks APL, he will only be paid statutory paternity pay of £135.45 per week for 19 weeks and for the last seven weeks, he will receive nothing (although some companies will have their own paternity policies in place). In some industries, men may find that taking ADL could have a negative impact on future career prospects.

Employers have also expressed their concerns with the maternity leave reduction. In a survey by Working Families, most employers said they would prefer a default of 26 weeks maternity leave and thought that the 18 week proposal could lead to higher absenteeism among women returning to work before they are ready. Other concerns were the costs of rearranging leave cover if plans change and the importance of retaining women's workplace talent.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE

The maternity/paternity benefits we have do need to be overhauled, but to promote real equality we need to protect what we already have and enhance them with the following

- Provide fathers and partners with paid time off to attend antenatal appointments with the mother. Currently, only women have paid time off to attend appointments.
- Introduce a 'daddy month' of four weeks, in addition to existing entitlements, and provided on a 'use it or lose it' basis
- Statutory pay for paternity leave and additional paternity leave to match maternity pay, which is 90% of income for the first 6 weeks followed by the flat rate of £135.45/week. This should be paid by employers and fully reimbursed by the Government in the same manner as statutory maternity pay.
- A new right to paid breaks and facilities for women to breastfeed or express milk on return to work.
- 26 weeks leave for fathers and partners where the mother is not in paid work or is



self-employed. Currently, fathers and partner have access to additional paternity leave only where the mother is an employee.

- Leave for fathers and partners to be a right from the first day of employment, just like maternity leave, rather than subject to an eligibility period.

In May 2011, The Department for Business Innovations and Skills set up a survey called the Modern Workplace Consultation, in which they wanted Companies and Unions to answer questions, amongst other things, about Flexible Parental leave. ASLEF responded opposing the proposed reduction in maternity leave.

Maternity Action and the TUC have set up a joint campaign called **Valuing Maternity** which ASLEF's Women's Representative Committee fully support. The website has lots of information about protecting maternity rights and also gives an opportunity to 'Rate Your Employer' www.valuingmaternity.org

How do you treat a trackside tree?

ASLEF's attitude towards trees at the side of railway tracks is clear. We have no objection to them (quite enjoy them, in fact) unless they create a safety hazard, by blocking sight of a signal, weakening an embankment, dropping leaves or obscuring a clear view of a crossing.

As advocates of green policies (of which railways are a central part) we also think that if a tree is a hazard, it should be dealt with in the most sympathetic way possible.

Simples, then? Not quite ... the debate continues, from the streets of Islington to the Palace of Westminster. KATY PROCTOR reports ...

Environmentalists, conservationists and resident associations have renewed calls for Network Rail to conduct public consultations before carrying out 'line-side vegetation maintenance work'. They insist that residents should be informed in advance about planned track-side clearing and demand a halt to cutting down trees where pruning would suffice.

Network Rail is responsible for maintaining the sides of the UK's 20,000 miles of track and does so to ensure safety and avoid delays on the railways. It says it needs to consider the steepness of embankments, soil conditions and the type of vegetation when assessing risk at particular locations. This is not entirely straightforward, because in some cases embankments are actually made more stable by the vegetation on them, and made less safe if they are cleared.

There is general consensus on the need for safety – but how you achieve it continues to cause emotive argument.

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS NEED PROTECTION

Residents living by railway lines insist that vegetation is sometimes cut back much further than necessary, in some cases 27 metres – over 88 feet – from the track. This, it is claimed, can leave gardens exposed, views spoiled and wildlife habitats destroyed.

Conservationists say that railways lines, especially within cities, are 'natural wildlife corridors and havens of biological and ecological diversity'. They offer important shelter for migratory birds, foxes and other animals to travel in and out of the city, and between green spaces.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds maintains that the clearance of track-side areas puts 1.5 million nests at risk of destruction, and argues that no tree felling should be permitted during the nesting season (between March and August). Environment activists agree, saying that the number of trees removed from railway embankments across the country each year is equivalent to destroying a forest. Earlier this year, protesting residents in Whitstable, Kent, chained themselves to trees to prevent them from being cut down.



Protestors in Whitstable in Kent chained themselves to trees to protect them from the chop

CUTTING COSTS

Labour's North Islington MP Jeremy Corbyn raised the issue in Parliament earlier this year, claiming that the root of the problem is that it is cheaper to cut down trees than repeatedly prune them. He told the Commons, 'Companies should factor the cost of tree pruning into their budgets.' Of course, he conceded, risks relating to leaves on the line and overhanging branches must be controlled but he insisted that there is only a problem with trees immediately adjacent to the lines, and, 'There is no need to clear 10, 15 or 20 metres back from the line.' He also argued that Network Rail (NR) should carry out annual maintenance, and that it was wrong to make decisions to clear-fell every five years.

Green Party MP Caroline Lucas emphasised this. 'In many cases Network Rail acts from a cost perspective and not from a genuine safety perspective – and is not held to account,' she declared.

Jeremy described how NR had recently cleared a considerable area in his North Islington constituency, including cutting down trees that had nesting birds in them. After a small demonstration outside NR headquarters, the company postponed vegetation clearance plans and agreed that in future it would inform the council of planned work taking in to account effects on nesting habitats.

Almost uniquely for Jeremy, his words attracted support from the other side of the



Trackside trees are nice to look at – but not easy to see through



Trees on the line cause delays at the very least – and are potentially serious safety hazards

House. Tory MP David Burrowes accused Network Rail of 'environmental vandalism', claiming that the company had assured him of consultation of further work in his constituency which 'had not materialised'. He called for NR to be subject to environmental impact assessments.

STRIKING A BALANCE

Transport minister Theresa Villiers adopted the rather tired line that as Network Rail is a private sector company, government ministers have no powers to instruct or direct it. She did, however, undertake to raise the matter with them. 'Efficiency and cost are a consideration, but environmental concerns have to be taken seriously too,' she said.

Network Rail has acknowledged that it needs to do better at resolving environmental concerns. It has also accepted that when it communicates with residents, it sometimes fails to convey the scale of the works that will be undertaken. It will, it says, strive to improve its consultation procedures.

ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2011

Under the provisions of Section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 ASLEF is obliged to provide members with a statement summarising its financial affairs.

Income and expenditure

	£
Total income	5,746,115
Total expenditure	4,955,602
£4,726,459 of total income comprised payments in respect of membership.	

Political Income and Expenditure

The figures above include £117,709 income and £119,657 expenditure in respect of the political fund.

Salaries and Benefits

	Salary	Employer's National Insurance contributions	Pension contributions	Benefits	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
K Norman, General Secretary	121,569	14,611	28,974	17,023	182,177
M Whelan, General Secretary	6,322	687	2,529		9,538
A Donnelly, President	16,639	684			17,323
Executive Committee					
H Bradley	34,078	3,584			37,662
D Calfe	10,645	253			10,898
M Colombini	36,127	3,732			39,859
B Corbett	33,325	3,294			36,619
N Gibson	37,394	3,803			41,197
T McDonald	22,886	1,768			24,654
T Wilkinson	23,442	626			24,068

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

We have audited the financial statements of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen for the year ended 31 December 2011 which comprise the consolidated income and expenditure account, balance sheet and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of freehold property and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the union's members, as a body, in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the union's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the union and the union's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND AUDITORS

The executive committee's responsibilities for preparing the annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and relevant United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) are set out in the statement of the executive committee's responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. We also report to you, if in our opinion, the financial review contained in the annual report is consistent with the financial statements, if the union has not kept proper accounting records or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

BASIS OF AUDIT OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes an examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the executive committee in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the union's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

OPINION

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with relevant United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the union's affairs as at 31 December 2011 and of its results for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and the information given in the financial review contained in the Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.

Hard Dowdy

a trading style of:
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Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
12 March 2012

Irregularity Statement

Under Section 32A(6a) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 we are obliged to publish the following statement. A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring or has occurred in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and if necessary securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with; the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of the rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice.

Union speaks out on CICA – and Government drops plans!

Mark Daniels told the TUC conference that government plans to reduce the benefits of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme was 'an unjust attack on the victims of crime who had obviously suffered enough'. And only a few hours later the proposals were – for the moment at least – withdrawn at a meeting of the House of Commons' Delegated Legislation Committee! With great modesty, Mark

conceded that 'It might not have been entirely down to my speech!'

Mark told delegates that it wasn't just the direct victim who suffered. 'There are effects on all the family,' he said as he recounted a personal experience.

'Six years ago I had a fatality on the line which affected me profoundly. But I was also deeply aware of the effects on my family. That's why when I did receive some



Mark talks and governments listen! Photo Andrew Wiard

– not huge – compensation from CICA for what had happened, I divided it between my children. While I was personally affected, I think they suffered most.'



General Secretary Mick Whelan (centre) with the union's TUC delegates Alan Donnelly, Simon Weller, Bernard Kennedy and Mark Daniels



A view of the TUC conference from the Visitor's gallery



Mick Whelan and Simon Weller met Che Guevara's daughter Aleida at the TUC's Brighton conference. We were lucky enough to have a short interview with Aleida which will appear in the November edition of the Journal

FRINGE PRESENCE

The union wasn't simply active in the conference hall. In addition to a fringe meeting we arranged with the other rail unions RMT, TSSA and Unite under the 'Action for Rail' banner, Mick Whelan addressed the Justice for Colombia fringe meeting and Simon Weller spoke at the Labour Representation Committee's planning meeting. The union also hosted a well-attended meeting about recruitment to the footplate grades, highlighting the union's diversity report.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT 'A BLACK HOLE'

'It is a tragedy that we are the first generation that cannot offer our children a better future than we could expect ourselves.'

They were the bleak words of Alan Donnelly as he spoke to the TUC Congress about the evils of youth unemployment. 'Our young people today leave school and stare into a black hole,' he declared.

'If there is a job for someone over 65, there is one for a person under 25,' Alan went on. 'It cannot be right that a

person can be earning wages and drawing both a state and company pension while young people are on the dole.'

He said that when he joined the railway, you had to be under 23. Now ASLEF had only a handful of members of that age.

'The TUC slogan is 'A future that works'. Let's make that a reality for our young people, who are in desperate need of dignity and hope.'



Alan points the way to a future that works. Photo Andrew Wiard

Procurement is a political issue

Simon Weller said government procurement should be based on value for people, and not just value for money.

'When local and national authorities make decisions about contracts they must be mindful that they are spending our money – and this comes with strings attached. Public procurement can promote jobs and industry. This is a matter of political will. It is hypocritical to hide behind European conventions.'

He spoke of the post-war slogan of 'Export or die'. 'We were operating in a time of genuine austerity then,' he said. 'But that was the result of a fight against fascism, not the consequence of bankers' greed.'

Simon insisted that we needed to use public procurement contracts to encourage skills and enrich communities and not just give them mindlessly to the lowest bidder.



Simon Weller declares that planned procurement can promote UK jobs and industry. Photo Andrew Wiard



Mick Whelan spoke at the Palestine Solidarity Campaign's lunch-time fringe meeting. The TUC pledged to organise a delegation to Palestine 'to determine how it can most effectively contribute to the end of the blockade'. Next to Mick on the platform are Professor Ilan Pappé, the Director of Palestine Studies at Exeter University and Mezna Qato, a history scholar at Oxford University

WHO SUPPORTS PUBLIC RAIL



Rail has been very much in the news of late, especially because of high profile of fares campaigns and the Virgin-First Group fracas about the West Coast franchise. Another story was the opinion poll the union commissioned that revealed 70% support for the end of privatised rail and its return to public hands. 'Every

time there is a survey of this nature the figures backing public ownership increase,' says Mick Whelan. 'It makes you wonder who actually wants rail in private hands.' So we decided to find out who backs public rail and who doesn't ...

THE PUBLIC : SEVEN IN TEN BACK PUBLIC RAIL



In the middle of last month the union released the results of a national survey carried out over the weekend of the 7-9 September by GfK NOP which revealed that 70% of the country wants rail to be returned to public ownership.

Asked specifically 'Do you think UK rail should be returned to public ownership?' a whopping 70% said they did, with 28% disagreeing and only 2% having no opinion.

'This is the biggest ever survey result in favour of returning rail to public ownership,' says ASLEF general secretary Mick Whelan. 'The unions, the train companies like Virgin and the public all want an end to this failed franchising farce.'

Mick called on the government and the Opposition to heed what the public had to say.

'It would be a democratic and practical step in the right direction to declare now that no franchise will be renewed when it ends,' Mick said. 'It would cost the public nothing, and would ensure that rail fares and profits benefit the travelling public, rather than shareholders and speculators.'

The 1,000 people surveyed were also asked 'Given the cost of fares, do you think more profits should be put back into the industry?' and the response was just as unequivocal. No less than 86% said 'Yes' while only 12% said 'No'.

Simon Weller used the poll results in a TUC speech in which he argued for

- the immediate nationalisation of the West Coast Mainline
- the retention of the East Coast mainline in public ownership and
- the return of all passenger services to public

ownership.

He condemned the 'insane system' where the government argues that rail needs risk capital from the private sector – but there is no risk involved for speculators. 'If they make a profit, they pocket it. If they look like making a loss, they hand back the keys.'

'Richard Branson said last week that – as a favour and only until the legal position had been sorted out – he would be prepared to run the West Coast on a not-for-profit basis. Well, why not have that system all the time?

He also dismissed Ed Balls' suggestion when he addressed the TUC the previous day that taking rail back in to public hands would 'cost millions'. 'If we wait until franchises end and don't re-let them, it costs exactly nothing,' Simon said.

THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS: UNANIMOUS BACKING



ASLEF's Bernard Kennedy spoke out in favour of a publicly owned and publicly accountable railway at last month's TUC Congress. 'Other countries view our privatised fragmented dysfunctional railway system with disbelief,' he declared.

Bernard said the 1993 Railways Act has led to a railway that is now 'a gigantic scam for siphoning off public money'.

'Just look at the soap opera of the re-franchising of the West Coast Main Line. Even Richard Branson thinks the system is unfair and unworkable. And that's just the passenger side!'

Bernard said. 'I work for DB Schenker the German State Railway that bought out EWS, which was the old BR Freight Sector.'



The BBC picked up on Bernard's assertion that UK rail is 'broken, de-railed and disintegrated'. Photo: Andrew Wiard

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE : CUTTING STAFF COSTS WOMEN'S SAFETY



WI says cuts can't compromise safety



The Women's Institute came out last month with a demand that the government stops railway staff cuts, insisting that the loss of staff on trains and stations 'could put female passengers at greater risk of attack and harassment'.

Ruth Bond, chairwoman of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, said women passengers feel reassured by the presence of uniformed staff.

It is clear to the WI that the profit motive cannot be applied safely to a public service like rail. Cuts might be impressive to the accountants and investors – but to the passenger, cuts cost safety.

Speaking jointly with Frances O'Grady, the new general secretary of the TUC, Ruth Bond said staff cuts would make train travel 'a dangerous and daunting option for many passengers'. They want staff at stations and on trains – and this is particularly the case for women. She also pointed out that this was not a theoretical argument as London Midland plans to shut, or reduce the opening hours at 86 of its 90 stations.

— AND DOESN'T ...

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT: A SAD SERIES OF ABJECT RETREATS

 Since 2007 the Scottish government has, as well as scrapping or significantly downgrading previous rail investment plans ...

- downgraded or scrapped significant aspects of the Edinburgh-Glasgow Improvement Program (EGIP) electrification plan - and abandoned half of the planned 200 miles of central Scotland electrification (July 2012)
 - scrapped promised early upgrading of the Perth-Inverness main line (2011)
 - scrapped the EGIP- intended Garngad Chord as a strategic regional link (2011)
 - scrapped the planned rail link to Glasgow Airport (2009)
 - vetoed the reopening of Edinburgh's South Suburban Line (2008)
 - scrapped a planned rail link to Edinburgh Airport (2007)
 - halted the planned Aberdeen Crossrail (2007)
 - discarded the planned Glasgow Crossrail route - Scotland's 'missing link' (2007)
- [With thanks to Railfuture Scotland]

THE UK GOVERNMENT : COMMITTED TO MORE OF THE SAME

 The most recent Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin insists that fare increases are necessary to pay for upgrades on the railways. The only way to reduce fare inflation was 'a relentless focus on efficiency.'

'The new minister clearly has little grasp of railway finances,' Mick Whelan said. 'There is a major problem with franchising that cannot be fixed by tinkering with the current system. The engine doesn't want oiling - it needs replacing.'

But Mr McLoughlin offers not a glimmer of hope for passengers. Fare increases, he insists, are necessary to pay for upgrades on the railways. And he then has the cheek to put the blame on railway workers, calling for 'a more responsible approach to pay'!



The new transport minister Patrick McLoughlin says passengers should pay for upgrades and wages need to be 'responsible'!



The union commissioned opinion poll revealed 70% support for returning rail to public hands

'The government's McNulty Report does not mention freight. This sector is left to the dog-eat-dog, race-to-the-bottom scenario of the open market. This will ultimately mean more trucks on our roads as freight grants are cut.'

He said the solution was outlined in the 'Rebuilding Rail' report which the union's had commissioned, and which argued that, 'The UK's privatised railway is failing society, the economy and the environment, whilst draining taxpayers' money into the pockets of private shareholders.'

'This paper shows that over one billion

pounds of taxpayers' money could be saved every year by reuniting the railways under public ownership. All the public money invested in the railway could then be put to some good use, delivering a better service for passengers while also achieving wider environmental and social goals,' he concluded.

There were no dissenters to the motion which was backed by the RMT, TSSA and Unite.

● Simon Weller was re-elected to the General Council of the TUC, topping the poll in the transport section.

LABOUR SHADOW MINISTER MARIA EAGLE: MONEY LEAKS ABROAD



Labour says UK passengers are subsidising overseas railway

 Labour's Maria Eagle has backed the union's case that UK rail is taking money from UK passengers to subsidise overseas rail companies.

She gave MPs telling examples last month of how rising UK fares subsidise cheaper fares on state-owned railways in other EU member states. Maria pointed out that

- the Chiltern and CrossCountry rail services are run by subsidiaries of Deutsche Bahn, the German state railway
- Southeastern, London Midland, TransPennine, Southern, are all run in partnership with subsidiaries of SNCF, the French state railway; and
- Greater Anglia and Northern Rail are run by a subsidiary of Ned Rail, the Dutch state railway.

Their UK profits go to subsidise rail in the home country of these firms.

Maria added, 'The ability of so-called private train companies to hike rail fares doesn't just mean additional profits, as the National Audit Office has warned, but it means additional dividends from those profits going back to the state railways of France, Germany and of the Netherlands.

'The consequence - fares that are on average a third lower on their domestic rail networks than on our own.'

Doncaster David – ASLEF activist, citizen of Texas and member of The Soviet Railway Union, steam locomotive tester and raconteur ..!

MY dad was a train driver, but my parents weren't overjoyed when I didn't mention to them that, aged 15, I was leaving technical college to join the railways as a cleaner. 'Think about working shifts all your life,' they said. But I'd always been interested in rail and steam and they said, 'All right, you've made your decision, so you'd better get on with it.'

Half a century down the line, David Court still says it was 'one of the best decisions of my life' as General Secretary Mick Whelan presented him with his 50-year medallion at ASLEF's Clerkenwell headquarters.

'As a young lad, I'd go to the shed and sneak a ride,' Dave chuckles. 'Locomotives were in my blood - or in my soot! Later, I was my dad's fireman at Donny a good few times. There were about 450 men at the shed - of course, there were no women in those days - working through the night. It was the norm when I started with postal, passenger and freight work under BR.'

David passed out as a driver early in 1976 at just 30, but to become a registered driver involved a move to Neville Hill. Ten years later he was back at Doncaster on a '12C' move when Leeds Neville Hill depot closed and the operation moved to the city. The 'Donny' routes were much as they are today - Kings Cross, Newcastle, Hull, Scarborough, March and local routes.

'The union was always part of my life. My dad was a staunch ASLEF man and I first went to meetings with him. I was secretary of the Donny branch and when Ron Dixon retired, I ended up secretary of Neville Hill. We still had contribution cards, with someone coming round to collect our bob a week. I also went to the very first ASLEF national school in the early '70s.'

And there can't be many people who the railways led to becoming an honorary citizen of Texas and an honorary member of the Soviet Union Railway Union. The first came about when he volunteered to act as fireman on the Flying Scotsman as part of a 1969 'Buy British' trade mission, driving the 2,200 miles and 17 states that separate Boston from Houston.

'Alan Pegler, a real character who became a great friend, was the man behind it. BR finished steam in 1968 and Alan bought the A3 class No 4472 Flying Scotsman for £3,000 and started running it on enthusiast specials. It was the only steam locomotive allowed on the rails at that time.



GS Mick Whelan (right) congratulated Dave on a remarkable career

'When I heard rumours he was taking it to America, I was desperate to go and I was lucky enough to be chosen. There was fierce competition. Every depot put up notices for volunteer drivers and firemen and 7,000 people applied. There were two drivers and I got the fireman job. I'm the only surviving member of the crew.

'We pulled six exhibition coaches, two Pullman cars (one used by Churchill and Eisenhower) and an observation car with a bar called 'The Fireman's Rest'.

David had only married the previous year, and says his wife may not have been quite so enthusiastic about him setting off for two months with 25 young women all sporting Scottish tartan mini-kilts! 'When we were on the road it was hard work - but always hard play, too!' he says with a smile. 'We had people from Pretty Polly, Cutty Sark, BSA motorcycles and BP exhibiting along with others.

'That lot - BP! They gave us white overalls and caps with their logo, but when they threw a big party in New York they invited all and sundry - but not the train crew. We told Alan



Dave with the union banner at the Barnsley miners' gala (with a rather young-looking Tosh McDonald!)

Pegler we weren't wearing them again and popped the lot into the fire-box!'

David watched the Scotsman being loaded onto the Cunard 'Saxonia' at Liverpool, but he flew both ways, BOAC out and Pan Am back. In fact, the only dubious part of the trip was that IRA supporters began to follow the train

campaigning for an Irish Republic and against British goods being sold in America. 'We were warned not to say we were from the trade mission. The threats to us were hollow, but you never knew at the time.'

When the locomotive team was in Dallas, they were made honorary citizens of Texas. And out of a sense of balance, twenty years later he was made an honorary member of the Soviet Union Railway Trade Union.

It was through ASLEF that David went with seven other members to the Soviet Union in 1988. 'The British Soviet Friendship Society subsidised a trip for about 50 union members each year, so it cost a couple of hundred pounds for the 16-day trip when the air fare would have cost three times that.

'It was during the Cold War, and there was all this stuff about not being allowed to take photos or go off route, which turned out to be

“ WE WERE ALL MADE HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET UNION RAILWAY UNION ”

rubbish. They were happy to show you anything. We stayed at a hotel called the Sputnik in Moscow, a town called Kostroma and Anapa on the Black Sea, visiting schools and industrial plants and meeting people. It was terrific – and I have to say it's the first time I'd tried caviar!

'We were all made honorary members of the Soviet Union Railway Union. I've still got my certificate, but as my name is in Cyrillic script, I'm not sure what it says!'

'People were genuinely friendly - which is a good thing, as one night I had been savouring the local brew and I happened to nod off on a trolley bus. I woke up in the middle of the night in a depot! Happily they sorted me out



Anniston Alabama welcoming Dave (and the rest of the trade delegation!)



The Flying Scotsman trade mission to the USA grabbed the imagination of the railway press



Steam didn't make Dave look especially sartorial!



Mick tested the Tornado for speed ...



Young Dave with the hammers and sickles of the USSR

and pointed me in the direction of our hotel!

So, fated on both sides of the Iron Curtain, what else could life have in store for the remarkable Mr Court? Almost incredibly, he became a steam locomotive test driver – in 2008!

'I returned to steam driving in the '80s and '90s when it started running more frequently, driving the Orient Express regularly as well as other locos like the Duke of Gloucester. During this time, a new loco was being built – the Tornado. This was because there were no preserved A1 steam locomotives.

'After a run from York to Scarborough we did test runs of equal to 17 coach runs (with Class 67 diesel locomotive in train consist). On the final test run York to Newcastle and return I

got done and later suspended for achieving over the 75 mph speed limit for steam traction by a considerable amount - making the outward test run the fastest 'start to stop' run in the world over the last 60 years for steam traction!

'Currently I'm chair of the Doncaster P2 Locomotive Trust, which aim to raise £5.5 million to build a 'Cock of the North' – the missing link of P2 locos.'

David is a busy man, and often talks to railway groups around the country. One thing is certain – with such a varied and exciting life on the rails, including driving the Royal Train and being on the footplate of the world's first 100% bio-fuel-operated traction, he always has a fascinating tale to tell!

A HUNDRED YEARS OF UNION

In the October 1912 ASLEF Journal, there was a piece about staffing on the railways - and observations on air flight ... Notta Bene reports ...

'In the case in which a signalman was found dead in the signal-cabin at Nuneaton, the coroner asked a railway inspector whether the lives of the travelling public would be safeguarded by having two men in certain signal-boxes where the rule was to employ one man only. The inspector said that accidents could not possibly occur if the block system regulations were properly observed. The jury, in returning a verdict of "death from

natural causes," recommended that all signalmen be medically examined yearly."

THE FUTURE OF AVIATION

"By the deaths of Captain Patrick Hamilton and Lieutenant Athole Wyness Stuart, the world is again reminded of the uncertainties of aeronautics. Indeed, it may be said that the uncertainty about this science is the one thing that is certain. The Army monoplane No. 258,

was caught by a sudden gust of wind, when about to pass over the village of Gravelly. Both of its occupants were killed on the spot."

"On September 10th, two more officers were killed in another inexplicable airship disaster."

Notta Benne commented: "In my opinion it is extremely doubtful whether aeroplanes can ever be completely successful, because it is quite impossible to say when the wind will change in force and direction."

○ Extracts selected and edited by Mick Holder



**YOU'D THINK THE GOVERNMENT
HAD BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN
ATTACK YOUR RIGHTS AT WORK.**



IT'S NOT AS IF THIS COUNTRY was exactly short of issues. We face urgent problems like a stricken economy, record youth unemployment and the gap between the super-rich and everyone else. Yet the government is devoting precious time and energy to attack, of all things, rights at work.

TUC

A stealthy series of changes that add up to a wholesale assault.

Already an extra year to wait for protection against unfair sackings, with reduced maternity rights and more dangerous workplaces in the pipeline. These sly attacks have nothing to do with getting the economy moving. They

come from the same people who fought the minimum wage and paid holidays.

By slicing away a bit at a time, they hope no-one will notice. But we have, and you should too.

Visit the website to find out more, and tell ministers they've been rumbled.

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CONTACT Wendy Hurst, Secretary of
ASLEF's women's committee
Tel: 07788 153 932 or email wendy.hurst3@ntlworld.com

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TONBRIDGE LOSE JACK CALLAGHAN AND PETER RANDAL

Jack Callaghan's old friend Derek Hardiman tells me that Jack, who served the railways for 47 years, has died at the age of 99.

Jack started at New Cross Gate, moving to Bricklayers Arms when it closed. I remember the day we left Ashford working a King Arthur with a big tender. When we got over Chart, Jack pulled the lever up, causing the tender to start hunting into the engine and the Kent coal to move. I tried to damp down the coal dust with the pep pipe, but it just followed the spray – leaving Jack's coat with a thick layer of grimy dust which he didn't notice until we got to London.

He finished his railway service at Hither Green where he was a well-liked and sociable character. He would go on holiday to Spain with some twenty of his friends. He also spent many happy hours at the Hither Green Social Club.

Our thoughts are with Jack's three surviving sisters at this sad time.

The branch also lost Peter Randal who started, cleaned and fired at Tonbridge. After National Service, Peter passed as a driver in 1956. After marrying Daphne, he moved to Beckenham Junction and then Sevenoaks, where he was soon on the LDC.

Peter then began night school and climbed the ladder to assistant Station Master, then Shed Master at Ramsgate. Liked wherever he worked, he assisted the Chief Motive Power Officer and was invited onto the British Railways Board. His arrival was greeted in the board room with the comment, 'Here comes trouble!' because he'd started at the bottom.

Peter never forgot his roots, bless him. May he rest in peace. Our thoughts are with Daphne and family at this very sad time.

Dave Weddle, Retired Members Section, Tonbridge

MICK TURRELL MUCH RESPECTED AND ADMIRER

Mick Turrell, who died suddenly in April, started his working life as an apprentice welder before joining London Transport in December 1983.

Mick began his career on the Underground as a direct recruit guard at East Finchley Depot and became active in ASLEF soon after. He transferred to High Barnet in August 1984 and passed out as a driver in 1986. He became the Local Depot rep for ASLEF, holding the position until the depot closed in 1992.

Most of the displaced High Barnet drivers went to East Finchley where Mick continued as a local rep and was then elected to Trains Functional Council in 1998, a position he held for 10 years.

Mick represented many members at Local and Company Disciplinary Interviews and managed to save many an errant drivers job by his tenacity and his attention to detail.

Mick's memory for dates and for when agreements were made was amazing. He was a much respected rep and his laid back attitude and patience were a great help to new reps who were learning the ropes.

Mick loved football and was a regular visitor to Carrow Road (Norwich City) and sometimes managed to make the trip north to Old Trafford (Man Utd). He also supported Barcelona.

Mick found personal happiness in the last years of his life when he met Edith in 2008. When Edith's visa expired she had



Mick Turrell

to go back to Nigeria, Mick would visit regularly and they eventually married there in May 2010. It took him nearly three years of legal battles and going back and forward to Nigeria to prove that their relationship was one of love and not convenience, before Edith was finally granted a visa and came to live in the UK in January 2012.

Mick was elated to finally have his wife here, but their happiness was short lived, when Mick tragically died of a heart attack on his way home from work. He was 57.

He was a great friend and colleague and the chapel was overflowing with drivers and other colleagues who made the trip to Norwich to pay their last respects. Edith wrote a very moving eulogy, which not only described Mick to a T, but left no one in doubt of her love for him. R.I.P. Mick

Deborah Reay, Secretary, Northern Line (North) branch

JOHN DOY A MAN OF MANY INTERESTS

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Brother John ('Wing Co') Doy after a short illness. He put on a brave face even after being diagnosed with an inoperable condition and given only weeks to live. He was only 51 years old and his popularity was shown by the packed C2C train to Corbetts Tay Crematorium in Upminster.

John began work in the licensed trade before getting 'a proper job' on BR at Ripple Lane. He got his tickets after years of meticulous training by his regular drivers eventually shipping off to East Ham on the sparks, where he remained.

John was an old-school BR driver who performed his craft well. His numerous pastimes included fishing, rugby (Wasps), the British Model Flying Association, all kinds of music – and his beer and backy! He was a good friend to his family and a popular man with his workmates over his 33 year career.

Our condolences go to all who knew him, especially his good lady Mary, who after the crematorium service, invited everyone to enjoy a tippie and reminisce back where his working life started at the 'Moby Dick' hostelry.

Cliff Blackwell, Reporter, Tilbury branch

MIKE CHILD A STRONG CHARACTER WHO DIED AT 74

The vast attendance at Agecroft Crematorium on 1 August spoke volumes about Mike, who lost his second fight with illness on 19 July at 74 years. He was a strong character in every way.

Mike began his loco career in September 1953 at Agecroft Shed until closure in 1966 when he moved his locker up the road to Patricroft for two years. But its closure found Mike in Manchester at Newton Heath until 1985 when that depot moved to Manchester Victoria. It also heralded a career change for Mike to Driver Instructor. He eventually retired in 1997 as a Traction Inspector.

A jazz lover, Mike enjoyed weekly walks with retired colleagues and seldom missed his daily bet on the horses. A loving close family man, our thoughts are with Sheila, Sharon and Terry at this sad time.

S. Black, Retired Members Section

IVOR GEORGE ALSOP EX BRISTOL MAN

I am sad to inform you that Ivor passed away on the first day of August after a long illness. He was aged 86.

Ivor was educated at Filton and joined the railway at Bristol Bath Road in late 1940s shortly after being demobbed from the army. His funeral at South Bristol cemetery was attended by a number of his former Bath Road colleagues.

Graham Bellamy, Retired Member, Bristol

ROGER GILBERT MOURNED BY RUGBY MEMBERS

It is with great sadness that we report the recent death of 64-year old retired member Roger Gilbert.

Roger was the sort of man whose company you would seek, always informative, funny and interesting. He was respected by his contemporaries, admired by his peers, and more importantly loved by family and friends.

Roger started and ended his railway career at Rugby, with spells at Cricklewood and Waterloo inbetween. A long standing and solid ASLEF member, Roger served Rugby

branch as local rep, trades council delegate and during the hectic times of 1990's privatisation he was also on West Midlands Freight Council. He also served for many years as a union-nominated member on Industrial Tribunals.

Roger was well known for his happy demeanour and his sense of fairness. Always willing to listen and give advice, he was also a very capable story-teller and always ready to have a good laugh, even at his own expense.

Many years after working on steam he was

asked to have a go at firing the Watercress Line. He often told the story of this warm summer's day, always ending by saying, "I don't remember them things being that hot!"

The turnout at Roger's funeral service was magnificent and afterwards many of us retired to the Rugby Railway Club to lift a glass or two in Roger's memory.

Our thoughts are with Roger's wife Chris and the family. He will be sorely missed.

Alexander Lakic / John Davidson,
Rugby branch

DAVE GUNINGHAM A TRUE FRIEND

It is with deep sadness, but also with fond memories and great respect that Waterloo Nine Elms reports the loss of a trusted friend and colleague Bro David Gunningham whose life was tragically cut short on 28 July after a heart attack at the age of just 46.

Dave started as a Revenue Protection Inspector in September 2000 and became a Trainee Driver at Waterloo in November 2001. We saw from the outset that he would be a significant presence both in the mess room and the branch. He gave up the infamous Waterloo night link to serve the membership as a rep.

Dave became Vice Chair of the branch, a health and safety rep and a member of the LDC. His enthusiasm and tenacity ensured that he excelled in all these roles, perhaps especially in the challenging tasks of a health and safety rep.

Dave was a fun-loving man who was a regular at branch social events. He was an obvious choice for the committee of our Social & Welfare fund and will be hugely missed at our annual outings to The Oval.

His love of cricket wasn't limited to county level. He joined 'Barmy Army' Test tours of Sri Lanka and saw the Ashes win in Australia – but he followed West Ham with even greater passion.

Dave's smiling face and unmistakable laugh will stay with anyone who had the good



Dave was a well respected and admired driver

fortune to spend time in his company. But perhaps his greatest quality was loyalty – something he demonstrated as a father, a family member, a trade unionist and to his work-mates at Waterloo, a friend. We could rely on Dave.

He was a man of deep religious conviction, and while many of us who don't share that faith will not claim to understand where Dave may now be, two things are absolutely certain – wherever he is he'll be looking after his mates and he'll be forever blowing bubbles.

Waterloo Nine Elms Branch

WILLIAM ('BILL') POWELL OLDEST OAK

I would like to record the passing of our oldest driver at Old Oak Common. Bill Powell passed away in August at the ripe old age of 93.

He did much good work at the depot, including serving as branch secretary for a time. His dad was also a driver at Old Oak.
Jack Adams, retired driver

DOUGLAS ALBERT CHAPMAN DIED AGED 86

Barbara Chapman, Douglas' wife of 60 years, tells me that this former driver moved into the top link on 7 December. He began at Leominster, where he became a driver but failed the 'without glasses' eye-test that was a requirement in steam days to work on the main line.

He took up a 'green card' job at Gloucester shed, before glasses were permitted with the advent of diesels and Douglas could take up his position on the main line. He retired after 36 years' service.

Douglas leaves a loving wife who believes railway personnel are the finest people in the world, one son and three daughters. Douglas' brother was also on the railway at Hereford. Rest in peace, Doug.

P. J. Smith, Reporter, Retired Members Section

IAN TAYLOR ONLY 45

It is with great sadness that I report the death of one of our members, Ian Taylor, at the age of 45 years, following a battle with cancer.

Ian started on the railway in September 1984 as a second man at Kings Cross before moving to Enfield Depot to obtain his driver's ticket. When Enfield closed in December 1989 he transferred to Charing Cross and then back to Kings Cross. He joined Bishop's Stortford depot in October 1998.

Ian was an active ASLEF Branch member, and was a co-opted Rep, branch trustee and a Trades Council delegate. Ian was passionate about Harlow Town Football Club and music and had a great interest in military aviation and railway modelling.

Our branch launched an appeal on his behalf in April 2012 and Ian was much heartened by the huge support he received from ASLEF members throughout the UK and derived great comfort from reading all the letters received. Our thoughts are with his family and on their behalf I would like to thank the ASLEF membership for the support and comradeship they showed.

Richard Roscoe, Secretary, Bishop's Stortford branch

GORDON ('JUDDY') FEARIS – NEVER A BAD WORD

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Gordon ('Juddy') Fearis.

Gordon was the LDC secretary at the Colchester Depot where he was respected by all the members. I worked with him at that time and when the going got rough, we could rely on Gordon to sort things out. I never heard him have a bad word or thought against anybody. He will be sadly missed.

Ken Anderson, retired branch secretary, Colchester



General secretary Mick Whelan and Branch Secretary Andy Jones occupy the front row with the Provost of North Lanarkshire, James Robertson

A hundred years of Motherwell Branch

The Provost and Councillors of North Lanarkshire Council hosted a civic reception on 22 June to mark the centenary of ASLEF's Motherwell Branch. The General Secretary, EC President and National Organiser kindly made the journey north to attend the event.

To mark this special occasion, the meeting was held in the venue where the first branch meeting was held – Motherwell's Masonic Hall. Our guests Mick Whelan, Alan Donnelly and Simon Weller, and our own EC member Hugh Bradley, addressed the branch before the General Secretary was asked to present members with their long service badges.

Thanks to our friends from Carlisle, Perth, Polmadie, Millerhill and Yoker for attending – and I

hope the Perth boys will excuse a mix-up concerning the buffet! Thanks also to Bro J Slaven and Debbie Baxter for their help in the design and production of the centenary brochure and badges, to our head office guests for their attendance and to all the branch members who helped to ensure the centenary celebrations passed successfully.

Finally a special word of thanks to our Branch Secretary, Bro Andy Jones, for all the hard work and many hours he spent organising the Centenary event.

On Sunday 23 June 1912 the ASLEF banner was planted in Motherwell. A century later, that flag still flies proudly.

Kevin O'Connor, Assistant Secretary, Motherwell branch

Two 50-year badges at Tonbridge

The Tonbridge branch celebrated a double 50-year medal presentation over the summer. District Organiser Graham Morris made the awards to retired driver John Barnes and driver Win Jeffreys, while EC members Marz Colombini handed a 45-year medal to shunter Bazil Baldock. Tonbridge Branch extends its congratulations to these three



John Barnes and Win Jeffreys

members - and our thanks to all who attended for making it a memorable evening.
Richard Payne, Secretary, Tonbridge branch

Upcoming events

○ MOTHERWELL CENTENARY 10 NOVEMBER

The Dinner Dance to celebrate the centenary of the Motherwell branch will take place on Saturday 10 November at the Colville Park Country Club at 19:00 for 19:30. Tickets are £12 and can be obtained from Branch Secretary Andy Jones by email at motherwellbs@aslef.org.uk or on his mobile which is 07767077907. Please notify any special dietary requirements.

○ GATESHEAD & NEWCASTLE 15 NOVEMBER

The annual Gateshead & Newcastle /NERSWA reunion will be held on Thursday 15 November at the Gateshead Railway Club from 13:00 onwards. All current and former staff are welcome and a buffet will be provided. For further information contact branch secretary Rob Porter.

○ HITHER GREEN 16 NOVEMBER:

The next reunion will be held on Friday 16 November in the Hither Green Railway and CIU Club, Beacon Road, SE12 commencing at 18:00 hours. Everyone connected with Hither Green, past or present, is welcome. For further information contact branch secretary John Staggs.

○ YORK RES 27 OCTOBER

The twelfth York RES traincrew reunion will take place at the usual venue (York Railway Institute) on Saturday 27 October from 19:00 until 23:00. All former RES traincrew and others wanting to catch up with old friends and workmates are welcome. A light buffet will be provided. For more information contact Brian Wallace of the York RMS Section.

Best wishes from West Brompton

The West Brompton branch has said a fond farewell to our lovely Bro Ian Ashbourne, a loyal ASLEF member during all his many years on the Underground. He began as a guard at Morden, moving to Parsons Green depot before it went to Earls Court.

We had a well-turned-out drink-up in the Woodman opposite the Southwest Trains Wimbledon Train Depot.

We also gave our best wishes for the future to another long time loyal member, Trevor Clayton who worked at various locations but spent most of his last few years as a Train Operator at Acton Town on the District Line.

Bob Lawrence was next on the honours parade, another 40-year member who for many years was based at Acton Town District Line.

Last but not least we bade a fond farewell to our well-known Bro Dave Feldwick who is retiring. Dave was a Guard and Driver before joining the Trains Council. He was based at Acton Town District Line and represented ASLEF members on the District Line and various locations on London Underground.

Dave ran for General Secretary a few years ago, but unfortunately he was not successful. He has been one of the best reps for many years. The branch became organised as it is today while Dave was its Secretary. We're grateful for all his work and I'm sure we will see him at future branch meetings. He continues to offer his experience and knowledge to Morden and Croydon Tram branches. Good luck to Dave in his retirement.

We also marked the 35 years membership of Brother Brian Lisely on Tuesday 21 August. We all offer Brian our congratulations and our gratitude for all your work and support over three and a half decades.

Greg Tasker, Secretary, West Brompton branch

DBS driver Chris Jennings seen off in style!

Marylebone-based DB Infrastructure monitoring Driver Chris Jennings retired in the summer and drivers came from all over the country to Reading Social Club to ensure his departure was suitably marked.

Chris started as a Southern man at Reading South steam shed in 1962. When it closed three years later he opted for a move to Basingstoke, passing out as a driver in 1974. This was when he got the nickname 'Gentle Jen', a big, quiet character in a TV programme of the time.

On 26 April '74 Chris was fireman to driver Tom Coleman on Merchant Navy Class 35028 'Clan Line' on the first return to steam on the main line.

In the build-up to privatisation in 1993, the

Basingstoke DEMU work on the Reading line was being transferred to Reading Depot and Chris became a Western Region man for the first time. It was then a tale is told of his attempt to extend the platforms at Paddington with a 'Turbo'!

In 2001 he joined Serco at Derby where he became an Instructor. When Serco set up a Marylebone depot, Chris returned to the Western Region where he acquired another nick-name – 'Jean-Luc' – something to do with Star Trek!

Chris served 40 years in an industry of constant change, worked in five depots and drove the 'New Measurement Train' – one of the most expensive bits of kit on the network.

Jim Rowe did a lot of the research about



Celebrating Chris (left to right) Colin Hayward, Brian Corbett, Philip Devonport, Chris Jennings, Sean Dunne

Chris' past and said he hoped we'd give 'the old fella' a good send off. I think we did that.

Philip Devonport, Secretary, DBS IM Company Council

A fond farewell to Grahame Nash

Earlier this year the Bristol Branch marked the retirement of one of its senior members – Grahame Nash. Grahame has seen many changes to the industry over the 48 years he has been an ASLEF member.

After joining at Salop in the early 1960s, Grahame came to Bristol Bath Road in 1984 following the closure of Cricklewood Depot. He served on the LDC for many years, first under British Rail and eventually representing the members on First Great Western high speed services. In addition he kept branch members in order (usually!) as their Chairman, and served on the branch Welfare and Social Fund committee.

The General Secretary, EC President and other EC members came to the meeting and after Mick had given a short 'state of the nation' address, he presented Grahame with his



Grahame's work earned him the admiration and respect of the Bristol branch

retirement certificate and an engraved silver tankard from the Bristol Branch. Celebrations continued well into the evening.

Grahame put in a great deal of hard work representing our grades, and we all wish him a long and happy retirement.

Bernard Kennedy, Secretary, Bristol Branch

TOTON PRESENTATIONS AT HEAD OFFICE

Mick Whelan was delighted to present retirement badges to a group of men I've known all my railway life' when drivers from Toton branch came to head office to collect their badges in front of the union's executive committee.



Above are (left to right) Dave Calfe, Mick Whelan, Alan Donnelly, Sean Madden, Bob Peach, Jim Canning and Stuart Richardson, who suffered the only disharmony of the day – when he was serenaded by the 'EC Choir' singing 'Happy Birthday'!

Raising a glass to Stratford John!

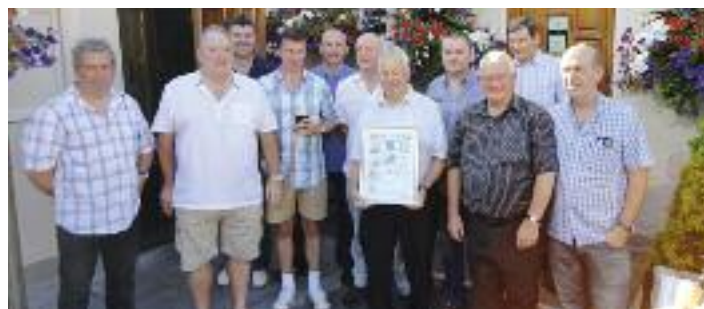
On 18 August the Stratford branch bade a fond farewell to John Hockley, who has retired after 50 years loyal service to the railway industry and ASLEF (although we've made sure he has a membership form for the Retired Members Section!).

Past and present friends and colleagues joined us at the Railway Tavern to raise a glass (or two) to John and present him with a framed canvas of himself driving a train, a book about East End railways, a voucher for a rail

steam charter and flowers for Carol, John's wife who will have to put up with him more now that he's retired!

Nigel Gibson, District 5 Organiser, presented John with a certificate and medallion to reflect his loyal membership. The numbers who attended were a testament to John, who joined the railway three days after his 15th birthday and retired three days after his 65th birthday. His footplate career was divided between Ripple Lane, Stratford, and latterly Liverpool Street on the Liverpool Street-Norwich Intercity service.

John will be sadly missed, as



Fond farewells to Driver Hockley at Stratford

he is certainly one of the railways' colourful characters, but he will no doubt enjoy having time for all his other interests which include football, table tennis and of course – his family!

We wish him – and Carol – a long, happy and healthy retirement.

John Thorpe, Reporter, Stratford Branch



These are the pages where you talk to us. We welcome your letters, either by mail to the **ASLEF Journal at 77 St John Street London, EC1M 4NN** or by email to **journal@aslef.org.uk**. Because of our space constraints, please try to keep your contributions as short as you can. This month we continue our **STAR LETTER** feature. The immensely lucky winner will pocket a rich range of ASLEF regalia!



Thanks from Hull

I would like to thank everybody at ASLEF, and in particular Nick Whitehead and my colleagues at Hull Trains for their support over the last few months. In April following an incident I was suspended from my driving duties on full pay and after an internal investigation I was dismissed from my job.

As you can imagine this was a stressful time for myself and my partner but with the backing and support of our union we successfully appealed against the original decision and I was placed back into the driver grade with the understanding that I undertake a period of re-training through the CDP procedure.

Once again I would like to thank everybody for their support.

J Redfern, Driver, Hull

Privs under attack

I am a former train driver who worked from 1951 to 1996 for Inter City and GNER. I've always been a proud ASLEF man, and at 77 I'm still in the retired members section.

I am writing to you about my free staff travel card. Three years ago I had a stroke that got me down the left hand side of my face. My wife is in bad health and can't travel with me so I wrote about my position to Alistair Darling when he was transport minister. They sent me back my staff travel

DRIVERLESS TRAINS - A HAZARD ON WHEELS

All this talk from politicians about trains without drivers has encouraged me to bring to your attention an incident that occurred to me recently. Politicians and members of the public who support this move need to be aware of what can happen if a train has no driver.

When I completed my duties at a station on the Southend line, everything looked clear in the monitors on the 8&12 cars after an extra dwell time because of certain inebriated people getting off.

I had a second glance as I went to close the doors. That was when I noticed a head between the running board of the fifth coach and the platform edge. It turned out that a young woman was trying to retrieve a mobile phone battery

in the dark on the track under the coach.

It transpired that she had gone onto the opposite platform and jumped down onto the track on the blind side of the train. Because of this I had to do a safety check around the outside of the train as no one at the time would own up to it.

My point is if that had a computer been in control of the train it would only look at the platform, so the doors would have closed and the train would have moved off.

Boris Johnson and his friends and supporters should note - you are playing with peoples' safety - and their lives.

Don Gutberlet, Driver, Southend Victoria

card and there, in black and white, it says I travel free 'and an attendant as the holder is disabled'.

I never had any bother with this until August when I went to the booking office to get a ticket to Mallaig. To cut a long story short, I was told in brusque fashion that my attendant would have to pay full fare. I asked to see the station manager but was

told he had gone home. It was the following day before I was eventually issued with two tickets - with my attendant's reservation two seats away.

It seems to me that under privatisation they don't even want to give us what is written in black and white on the card - and that all our travel privileges are in danger.

T. Beale, retired driver, Doncaster

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MOTHERWELL 100 REGALIA: To celebrate its centenary, Motherwell Branch has produced commemorative badges (£5), ties (£7 for blue, blue clip-on or maroon) and brochures (£2.50). Cheques to 'ASLEF Motherwell Branch Centenary Fund' and further information from Andy Jones on 07767077907 or

motherwellbs@aslef.org.uk



ASLEF/ROYAL BRITISH LEGION 'POPPY BADGE' This limited edition badge has been produced to raise funds for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and my local RBL Anyone wishing to purchase, please send a cheque for £6.00 (P&P included) payable to Trevor Southgate at 56

Leggatt Drive, Bramford, Ipswich IP8 4EX or email Suggy125@hotmail.co.uk



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ENGRAVING: ASLEF driver based in Sunderland branch offers professional engraving at reasonable prices. I can engrave anything you wish, such as the ASLEF logo on a pint tankard which is pictured. For further details contact Paul Potts by email at ppotts1969@hotmail.co.uk.

Visiting Colombia: a harrowing experience

Earlier this year General Secretary Mick Whelan and EC member Nigel Gibson joined other trade union leaders, lawyers and Members of Parliament on a week-long delegation to Colombia. Here Nigel describes a harrowing yet inspiring experience ...

We had an early impression of conditions in Colombia when the bus from Bogota airport to our hotel was accompanied by a police escort. It was a safety precaution that continued wherever we travelled.

Justice for Colombia (JfC) had managed to arrange a meeting with the CUT and CTC trade union organisations, the equivalent of our TUC. But while Colombian activists seek, like us, to defend workers' interest, they run the constant risk of violence and murder. Intimidation is such that only 3% of the working population dares belong to a union.

In Soacha, a deprived area of Bogota, we met the mother of Julian, a young man killed by the army. Her house consists only of a living room, kitchen and upstairs bedroom, but she was apologetic for not having enough chairs for us all. She told us about the 'disappearance' of her son and the effect on her whole family. As others came in to recount similar stories, a deep sense of sadness and emotion permeated the room. We were told of young men falsely 'recruited' into the army with a promise of work who were later found dead in the dress of guerrilla fighters. Incredibly, army soldiers are rewarded with additional leave for successfully killing 'guerrillas'. Meanwhile, mothers wait months to identify their dead children, constantly hindered and threatened by the authorities and their agents.

MEETING WITNESSES

In Puerto Asis, a small town in the south of Colombia, we were welcomed by around 150 people in a school which doubles as a day



ASLEF's Mick Whelan (third left) and Nigel Gibson (behind Mick) marching in Colombia



The UK delegation waits in hope that Lilliany will be released after four years of unjustified imprisonment

conference centre. Many had travelled miles to share their testimonies in the hope that a delegation from the UK could raise awareness of their plight within the international community. We heard from human rights activists, community leaders, trade unionists and political representatives. Many had been driven off their land as the Colombian government failed to deal with violent crimes and turned a blind eye to multi-national companies stripping land from working people.

In previous years JfC delegations have been allowed to visit the Women's Prison, Buen Pastor, in Bogota. This time the authorities allowed only five people inside. This gave me time to visit the university, a vibrant place, artistically adorned with slogans and pictures that give hope that Colombia will make it through the existing regime, to a better future. One slogan, perhaps five foot high, read 'Amplios en la politica. Duros en el combate. Tiernos en el amor' which translates as 'Broad in our politics. Hard in our Struggle. Kind in our love'.

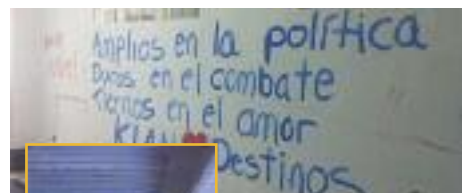
SOLIDARITY REWARDED – LILLIANY RELEASED

We knew that it was possible that a woman called Lilliany Obando might be released from the Buen Pastor prison and that evening we waited outside, hoping to see if Justice for Colombia's campaigning work would come to fruition. Prison visitors passed us, fetching toiletries and other simple items that aren't routinely provided to detainees. Then Lilliany, a human rights campaigner and academic, imprisoned without trial on bogus charges since 2008, emerged from the jail. It is impossible to convey the mixture of injustice and elation that greeted her release.

On our last day I met some of the Colombian security services who are responsible for ensuring the safety of human rights activists and union leaders. We



Justice for Colombia played a huge part in liberating Lilliany Obando from prison



A plea for justice on a university wall. Left: Another murdered son. Nigel met Julian's mother in an emotional exchange

expressed our concerns about Lilliany's safety after her release. They said even if they decided she needed protection, it would take at least 30 days to arrange.

Later in plush offices we met people of apparent 'importance' representing the Foreign Ministry. Initially they pretended not to speak English, but later we discovered they were fluent. It was a guise so that most of our allocated time would be taken up by translation. It was clear - in any language - that they were either in denial about the suffering in their country - where people are murdered for defending the rights of fellow workers - or that they simply accept this as part of 'life' in Colombia, and allow the government agenda to persist.

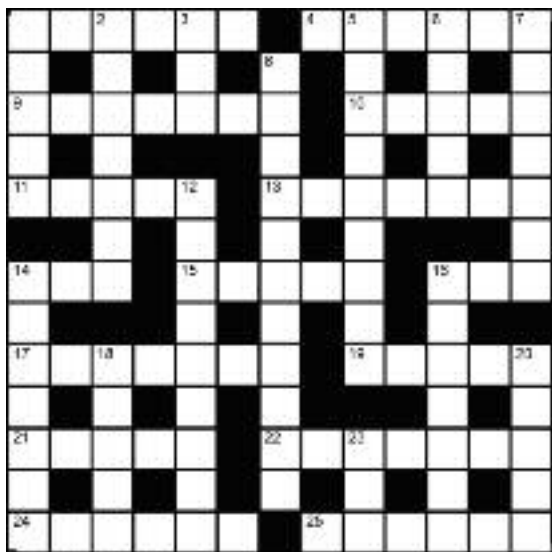
A HAUNTING MEMORY

I have supported Justice for Colombia for many years so I thought I knew a lot about the country before I went on this delegation. But actually going on delegation was a harrowing and humbling experience I will never forget. We often hear that Colombia's problems are down to drugs. I hope that this personal account will help people, whatever their political agenda, to see that ordinary people are suffering at the hands of those who exploit and steal from their country.

ASLEF has a proud history of working closely with Justice for Colombia to highlight human rights violations. I very much hope this will continue. I know how hard Mariela, Natasha, Victor and the volunteers have to work to highlight the repression and I urge you to help them with their work.

📍 Justice for Colombia can be contacted at www.justiceforcolombia.org or by phone at 020 7324 2490 or by writing to them at ASLEF's head office address.

Prize Crossword No. 78 set by Zebedee



Solution to prize crossword No 77 which appeared in the September 2012 edition of the ASLEF Journal

Congratulations to **M. Alesbury** from **Whitehill** in **Hants**

Across: 7 Lama, 8 Executor, 9 Larger, 10 Miller, 11 Lake, 12 Oleander, 15 Leavings, 17 Hair, 18 Louche, 21 Misuse, 22 Loiterer, 23 Lark. **Down:** 1 Database, 2 Dangle, 3 Dear John, 4 Deem, 5 Dublin, 6 Dote, 13 Easy mark, 14 Emissary, 16 Vacate, 17 Hustle, 19 Oboe, 20 Eyre

Across

- 1 Lag behind; hang about (6)
 4 Roman emperor title (6)
 9 Top-people's guide (4,3)
 10 Prepare butter by agitating cream (5)
 11 Relinquish; surrender (5)
 13 Carefully attentive (7)
 14 Affirmative reply (3)
 15/16 One who cheats or betrays (5,3)
 17 A river in northern Italy (7)
 19 Strongly desiring and keen (5)
 21 Take as one's own (5)

Down

- 22 Egg white (7)
 24 Talk under one's breath (6)
 25 James ____, US gangster-film actor (6)
 1 Meekly; in a humble position (5)
 2 Chemical compounds (7)
 3 Weather Bureau's code for "extreme weather warning" (3)
 5 Original model or pattern (9)
 6 Extinguish; some tobacco (5)
 7 Curl of hair (7)

8 Partner's parent; her

- tongue a plant (6-2-3)
 12 To whom e.g. a book is inscribed (9)
 14 Can drink, when the sun is over it (nautical) (7)
 16 Course of diet (7)
 18 Encourage; lift (5)
 20 Long-, loose-limbed (5)
 23 Snake; feather scarf (3)



The winner of this month's crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25

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Thanks for all your responses to the 77th ASLEF crossword in the September edition. If you complete this month's crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 77 St John Street, London EC1M 4NN by the 14th of the issue month.

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